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REPORT  
OF THE  
JOINT COMMITTEE  
ON  
PENSIONS AND GRATUITIES.

READ IN SENATE, JANUARY, 1843.

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## REPORT.

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The Committee on Pensions and Gratuities report:—That at a joint meeting of the Committee on Pensions and Gratuities of the Senate and House of Representatives, they have agreed to adopt the following system of rules, in relation to services rendered, and the evidence requisite to authenticate the claims for pensions and gratuities, viz :

1st. Two months' service in the Revolutionary or Indian war, prior to the treaty made by General Wayne with the Indians at Granville, in the year 1795, shall entitle the soldier or his widow to a gratuity of forty dollars.

2nd. Four months' service shall entitle applicants to a gratuity of forty dollars, and an annuity of forty dollars, payable half yearly, to commence on the 1st day of January, 1843.

3d. Widows of soldiers of the Revolutionary or Indian war, who were married previous to the said treaty of Granville, in 1795, shall be entitled to a gratuity, or gratuity and annuity, as the case may be, according to the services performed by her husband.

4th. Proof of the petitioner being in necessitous circumstances, will be required in all cases, or a certificate from a member of the Legislature, stating, that he knows personally the petitioner to be poor and in need of assistance.

5th. Proof by one or more creditable witnesses, that the services were performed in the Pennsylvania line, or in the militia of Pennsylvania, will be required.

6th. The applicant must set forth, in his or her petition, the services performed, the length of time served, and the fact of his or her being in indigent circumstances; to which statement he or she must be sworn or affirmed.

7th. When positive evidence cannot be obtained in relation to services rendered, the following will be received:—A detailed statement of the time and kind of service performed by the applicant, and the officers under whom he served, verified by his own oath or affirmation, and accompanied by the deposition of two or more respectable persons, stating that they are acquainted with the petitioner, that he is worthy of credit, that they believe his statement to be true, and that he is generally reputed by those who have known him, to have been in the Revolutionary or Indian war. The respect-



ability of the deponents to be certified by two Justices of the Peace of the neighborhood where they reside, or by one or more members of the Legislature, and the like evidence shall be received in support of the applications of widows of soldiers of the Revolutionary or Indian war.

8th. Those receiving pensions from the United States, shall not on that account be precluded from receiving a gratuity or annuity from the State.

9th. No person who has received a gratuity at a former session, will be allowed another, without additional evidence to justify the same.

10th. A certified copy from the war department, of the documents on which a pension was procured from the United States, for a soldier of the Revolution, shall be conclusive evidence of the right of the widow to a gratuity and pension, agreeably to the rules hereinbefore prescribed: *Provided, however,* That the widow shall in all cases prove her identity by the oath or affirmation of some person or persons, having a knowledge thereof, or by general reputation.

From these rules, it will be perceived, that positive evidence is alone admissible, and in all cases required, to prove the poverty or necessitous circumstance of a claimant. With regard to the services, however, alleged in each application to have been performed, general repute, accompanied by a detailed statement from the applicant, of the time and kind of service rendered by him, and of the officers under whom he served, together with the affidavits to his credibility, of two or more respectable witnesses, duly accredited by the certificates of two Justices of the Peace of their neighborhood, or by the certificate of a member of the Legislature, are deemed sufficient. Such is the unavoidable defect of testimony resulting from the lapse of time, that simple justice, it appears to the committee, imperatively requires this relaxation. The same reason, however, does not apply to the question of poverty. The latter is susceptible of easy solution, by positive and direct proof. This the committee, following the example of its predecessors, has deemed it a duty in all cases to exact.